



## NEWS RELEASE

**EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE UNTIL: 9AM MST TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2003**

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**Utah Governor, First Lady Leavitt To Receive Award  
for Leadership in Child Health**

***National program recognizes support of  
child health information systems***

**Salt Lake City—**Utah Governor Michael O. Leavitt and First Lady Jacalyn S. Leavitt will be honored Tuesday, March 25, with a leadership award from All Kids Count for their commitment to improving the health of Utah's children through the application of information technology.

As champions of childhood immunization for more than a decade, the honorees have helped to dramatically increase Utah's child immunization levels. State immunization levels for 2-year-olds were the lowest in the nation in 1991 at 36.5%. By 2001, the last year for which data are available, they had increased to 66%, despite children needing three additional immunizations by age 2.

Governor Leavitt has played a key role in developing the Utah State Immunization Information System (USIIS), a confidential computerized information system that is an important tool for increasing immunization rates. Administered by the Utah Department of Health (UDOH), this central repository for all children's immunization records helps to improve immunization levels by giving health providers quicker access to immunization records and keeping track of a child's immunization status. It helps parents, too, by keeping a complete and updated record of their child's immunization history, even when they change healthcare providers. Only authorized users can access immunization records in USIIS.

Recognizing the important role of information systems in improving the health of children, the governor convened summit meetings with UDOH, health plans, pharmaceutical companies and other stakeholders to generate support for developing USIIS. He is credited with bringing the private health care sector into the immunization registry arena. Today, USIIS is a community partnership, with much of the immunization

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data and almost half of its funding contributed by private sector providers and healthcare organizations.

As chairperson of the Every Child By Two Immunization Task Force since 1993, Mrs. Leavitt has led statewide immunization efforts by creating public and private partnerships, fostering collaboration with managed care organizations, and promoting education of healthcare providers and the public about the importance of timely infant immunizations.

"Supporting efforts to improve the healthcare of children and the quality of life for Utah families is one of our top priorities," said the Leavitts. "We recognize the importance of and will continue to support technological improvements in government services as well as traditional public awareness and education efforts to ensure greater healthcare access for Utahns."

The Leavitts are building a legacy of commitment to family and children in Utah with the establishment of health care options for the uninsured through the Utah's Children's Health Insurance Program and the Primary Care Network. Other health initiatives undertaken by the Leavitts include Utah's Baby Your Baby prenatal care program and the Baby Watch Early Intervention program. The Leavitts also chair the Governor's Initiative On Families Today (GIFT), which supports organizations, agencies and communities that foster positive family relationships.

All Kids Count, a program of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation since 1992, has helped to foster development of immunization registries across the country. The program now assists state and local public health agencies, including UDOH, that are working to integrate information systems that hold information critical to improving the health of children. UDOH is developing Child Health Advanced Records Management, or CHARM, an information system that will allow real-time data sharing across healthcare programs and with private sector partners, reducing the fragmentation of healthcare services. The system will integrate information from multiple child health information databases, including hearing screening, newborn metabolic screening, early intervention and immunizations.

"We are honored to present the Leavitts with an award for their outstanding contributions to the health of Utah's families and children," said David A. Ross, ScD, executive director of All Kids Count. "Their support is critical to increasing recognition of the important role of information systems in improving children's health. Utah's health information systems serve as models to be replicated or adapted by other states."

**Note:** The award presentation will take place at 9 a.m. at the Little America Hotel and Towers, 500 South Main Street, Wyoming Room, Salt Lake City, Utah.

To learn more about USIIS, visit [www.usiis.org](http://www.usiis.org). For more information about All Kids Count and Connections, visit [www.allkidscount.org](http://www.allkidscount.org).

## **USIIS FACT SHEET**

### **About USIIS**

The problem of incomplete immunization records has been an issue for clinics and health care providers because parents might change health care providers in the course of their child's immunization series. The immunization registry is a tool that can consolidate records for children immunized in the state. Presently, participation for physicians is voluntary. Only authorized health, medical office professionals, school and daycare officials, and publicly funded programs are able to access the immunization information.

### **USIIS Performance**

(As of March 10, 2003)

- 83.3% of children < 6 years of age in Utah who have at least two immunizations are in USIIS
- 1,085,674 patients entered
- 5,983,885 vaccines entered
- 1,490 users
- 132 private sites enrolled
- 49 public sites enrolled

### **2004 Goal:**

- Enroll 250,000 children under the age 6 with at least one vaccine in addition to the first Hep B.
- Exchange current immunization and demographic information with 50 public and 250 private databases and registries.

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